

THE GENEVA PRIMER OR CALVIN'S ELEMENTARY CATECHISM

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In 1562, the Genevan printer François Jaquy published a religious book for students and for use in homes called *Instruction for Christians*.¹ An interesting preface found on pages three and four goes like this:

The printer to all those who want to be instructed in the fear of God: greetings in Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of the honor and service that Almighty God requires of us is so perfectly summarized and presented in the *Catechism Dedicated to all the Churches of Jesus Christ*² (whose light lifts all shadows) shows perfectly that there is no need to write another treatise or separate book. But when we have to teach in school about God, in response to the invocation of his Holy Name, about faith, obedience, and the knowledge of what we must do, and several of the principal points concerning his glory and our salvation, we are so helpless that we completely lose heart, if we have no help. For this reason several people, wanting to overcome such a lack, have written Summaries and booklets of instruction to serve as manuals for those who are not able to understand and retain what is taught at greater length elsewhere; and for greater ease have included only the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the model for all other prayers, the summary of our Christian faith and the Ten Commandments of the Law of God, in which we learn what his Majesty commands and forbids us to do. Now, in addition to these things, the author³ which we have just published preserves this order and has added the Short Catechism and additionally has added several passages from the Holy Scripture in support of these points. My first wish is to present them to you, praying that God will thus strengthen us by his Holy Spirit, that he will increase our faith, write his holy will upon our hearts, and move us to unceasing prayer.

It appears from this text that in sixteenth-century Geneva, Calvin's catechism, classic that it was, did not have a monopoly, but that religious instruction was diversified. There were summaries which were supposed to aid memorization and personal witness, and which were organized around the Lord's Prayer, the Confession of Faith, and the Ten Commandments.⁴ Moreover, the publisher presents us with the book he has just printed as an improvement on the existing summaries, because it added the "Brief Catechism" and more numerous passages of Scripture, organized in a better way.

What are we to conclude from what François Jaquy says, and to what degree are his words based on facts?

An examination of the documents and printed materials of the time reveals the existence of primers which taught, side by side with the knowledge of letters, phonics, and numbers, the rudiments of faith. Already in 1545 such a small work was found on the list of books condemned by the Sorbonne. Under the rubric of anonymous works in French, the censure proscribed, among others: "Primer for children containing the following: The Lord's Prayer etc., showing the form for making one's profession of faith, for which it is especially to be condemned."⁵

Fifteen years later a certain Philippe Berry, a journeyman cobbler, was arrested at Dijon.⁶ The belongings of the prisoner were searched and these things were found: "a New Testament in French without the first pages, the Psalms of David set to music and 'The Form of Ecclesiastical Prayers' in the same volume,"⁷ and another of the same 'Psalms of David and Form of Prayers' published in Geneva.⁸ And a little booklet, covered with parchment, entitled 'Primer for Christians Containing Questions for Children etc.,' and another which is imperfect called "Summaries of Deuteronomy," and a request by the said Berry to the governors of Geneva requesting that he be permitted to live in their city, signed by the said Berry."

In addition to these two references, we have the good fortune to possess still four of these primers. Their Genevan origin is certain. One, entitled *The French Primer*, was published by Jean Crespin in 1551;⁹ another published, probably in 1562,¹⁰ by Antoine Davodeau and Lucas de Mortière; the third, *Primer or Instruction for Christians*, dated 1568, was also published by Jean Crespin;¹¹ the fourth, *Primer or Instruction for Christians*, appeared in 1630 from the press of Paul Marceau.¹²

All four booklets are manuals for elementary pupils and are conceived according to the following plan: (1) Alphabet; (2) Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed and Ten Commandments; (3) Prayers to recite at home or at school; (4) "Brief Treatise Required for those Who Wish to Partake of the Holy Supper of Our Lord," also called in the editions of 1568 and 1630: "Collection of Principal Points which those who Wish to Partake of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ Must Know"; (5) "The Form for Questioning Children Whom One Wishes to Receive the Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ"; (6) Elements of arithmetic.

Among these contents, certain things remained unchanged from one edition to another: naturally the texts of (2), but also the text of (4); others, presented again, have variations: thus "The Form for Questioning Children" was abbreviated in 1551 and in 1630, and expanded in 1562 and 1568; the same goes for another part entitled "The Questions Asked by the Ministers of the Church of Geneva of Children who are Presented to be Received at the Holy Supper."

Moreover, each primer has its own originality by the insertion in the overall outline of this or that point. In 1551, there were forty biblical passages, "very useful and greatly edifying"; in 1562 and in 1630, these were replaced by a liturgy for family worship entitled "Exercise for the Father of the Family." Finally the primer of 1568 gives a Greek alphabet before the elements of arithmetic, as well as the Lord's Prayer in the original language with the French translation under each word.¹³

It is interesting to note that these primers were written in a Genevan tradition well established before the Reformation.¹⁴ Here are different links in the same chain:

1) Around 1530, the editor Gabriel Pomar, specialist in printing missals, breviaries, and other Catholic liturgical books, published in Geneva a student's booklet in Latin, containing an alphabet, the "Our Father," and some extracts from the office of the Virgin with the "Credo."¹⁵

2) In 1532, Wiegand Koeln published "Doctrine and Instruction for Christian Boys and Girls." This small work, written in Latin in spite of its French title, contains an alphabet, the "Our Father," some selections from the office of the Virgin with the "Credo," the seven penitential Psalms, and a section of words divided into syllables.¹⁶

3) In 1533 Calvin's cousin, Robert Olivétan, published in Geneva at the press of Pierre de Vingle "Instruction for Children."¹⁷ This French booklet taught not only letters, grammar, accents, punctuation, and numbers, but also the rudiments of the Reformed faith according to the following order: the Lord's Prayer, the articles of faith, the Ten Commandments, the salutation of the angels. This last piece constituted a Protestant reply to the liturgy of Mary published by Pomar and Koeln. Jean Girard published a second edition of "Instruction for Children" in Geneva in 1537,¹⁸ the same year that the first catechism of Calvin appeared.

4) The primer censored by the Sorbonne in 1545.

5) The primer of 1551.

6) The primer seized by the Inquisition in 1561.

7, 8, and 9) The series of primers of 1562, 1568, and 1630.

Besides this sequence, "The Instruction of Christians," published by Jaquy in 1562, appeared with its 288 pages in sextodecimo. It was not in the series. It envisioned less the instruction of children than the edification of families. While keeping the arrangement of the primers, it grouped around the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments a striking number of biblical citations, occupying pages 5 to 146. Then follows a piece of twenty pages, unknown elsewhere, called in the preface, "The Brief Catechism." In it the service of God is defined by the four words: faith, invocation, obedience, gratitude. It might be considered an early resumé of the Heidelberg Catechism. In fact, it is not that and we do not know who the author is. Then one finds in the book what every communicant must know: "The Small Treatise" and "The Questions Asked by the Ministers" (pp. 180-197). The "Mirror of Youth" [by Mathurin Cordier], "The Organization of the Christian Home," which takes sixty pages (pp. 223-284), and finally a "Brief Summary of Arithmetic" are added. The book with its too numerous biblical citation, does not appear to have had great success. We know only of the 1562 edition, and it was perhaps the only one.

Even though the preface of Jaquy's book is so informative, now our attention will be directed more toward the primers.

Let us now try to determine the rôle played by the primer in Calvin's Geneva.

To understand the place of the primer it would be necessary to know the grade in which children were required to pursue religious instruction. The official texts tell us nothing. Might the student's age allow any conclusion? In Strasbourg, Jean Sturm fixed the beginning of studies at five or six years. In Lausanne and Geneva the normal age for

entering the seventh level was without doubt a little later, say six or seven years.¹⁹ Moreover, beginning with the second level class, the catechism lesson yielded place to the reading of the Greek New Testament.²⁰ We may conclude from this that the completion of catechetical instruction and the admission to the Holy Supper must have taken place on leaving the third level class, that is at about age eleven to twelve years.²¹ In sum it was at an age where the memorization of a manual such as Calvin's is practically excluded.

Calvin never anywhere else required that the child know his catechism by heart. "When a child is sufficiently instructed to recite the catechism," says the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541 and 1561, "let him [or her] recite solemnly the summary of its contents; thus he [or she] will present a profession of his [or her] Christianity in the presence of the Church." Then the child would be admitted to the Holy Supper.²²

Certainly *The Order of the College* of 1559 specifies that each Saturday from three to four o'clock, the seventh through the third level classes recited the section of the catechism in preparation for Sunday, with recitation according to the capacity of the pupils.²³ But the limited weekly assignment of a student followed by an adequate explanation is one thing; a profession of faith before the community is something else. Yet again it is one thing which can be asked of a pupil who has the benefit of regular study, quite another thing that could be expected of a child who had studied only a particular assignment.²⁴

In fact, Calvin was a better pedagogue than is commonly acknowledged. For one thing, he ascribed great importance to primary instruction: "When a person is poorly taught from childhood, even though he [or she] works lifelong to forget the corruptions with which he [or she] has been filled, he [or she] never comes to the point that he [or she] does not retain some spot and some soil. Thus we see what grace God gives to those who are taught well."²⁵

For another thing, all good teaching must begin in the service and honor owed to God.

Those to whom God has given the honor of having children, let them know that they are all the more obligated to take pains that their children are duly instructed. Thus if they wish to have good instruction, it is always necessary to begin with faith. For children could give the appearance of having all the virtue in the world, but that would be worth nothing, unless God be feared and honored by them. How frequently we see those who take great pains that their children be indoctrinated in the business of the world! It is true that they provide excellent teachers for their children, but for the purpose of making a grand show, so that they might know some three words of Latin and be able to display at the dinner table that they converse easily and can put up a good front according to the world. Yet it is never a question of knowing God! It is the wrong way to proceed! It is putting the cart before the horse!²⁶

Finally, according to Calvin, you should not cram full the head of a child nor cause him or her "to lose the little bit of courage he [or she] has."²⁷ "The duty of a good and prudent teacher will be to accommodate himself to the capacity of those he teaches; that is, when he has to deal with unlettered and weak persons, he begin with the rudiments and basic principles, and go no higher than they are able to attain. In short, let him teach them little by little and, so to speak, let it seep into them, lest in pouring too much, they vomit it up."²⁸

These various reflections show us that the elementary booklets had an important rôle in religious instruction in Geneva.

Let us examine the relationship between these primers and Calvin's own catechetical works.

When the reformer published his manual in 1542, he left intact a proven tradition of elementary religious teaching. When speaking in his writings of the rudiments of faith, he adds, "as if one were saying the ABCs."²⁹ The outline in the booklets did not concern him, even though it was different from his catechism. Still in 1559, he provided that each evening, before leaving the College, three children in turn would recite the basic texts of our faith in order: the Lord's Prayer, the Confession of Faith, and the Ten Commandments,³⁰ an order which corresponds precisely to that of the primers. Moreover, these primers appear regularly beside Calvin's manual, proof that they are important documents.

But there is more. When one examines the contents of the booklets, one notices that from 1545 on all the personal material, that is, everything which is not basic text, is changed and replaced by pieces inspired by Calvin. The principal new material is a piece which the censure of the Sorbonne calls "The Form for Making a Profession of Faith." It includes two parts which are found in all the primers: "The Brief Treatise Required for Those Who Wish to Partake of the Holy Supper of Our Savior" and "The Form of Questioning Children Whom one Wishes to Receive at the Supper of Our Savior Jesus Christ."

So, if one considers that the "Brief Treatise" is an excellent resumé of Calvin's catechism, bearing the imprint of the master, that "The Form for Questioning Children" is incorporated in the same catechism of the reformer from 1553³¹ on, that, for another thing, the prayers of the primers are for the most part the prayers of Calvin, we come to the conclusion that the elementary booklets give us not only texts inspired by Calvin, but also texts from Calvin himself.

The Genevan primer is in sum an elementary catechism of Calvin. Certainly, François Jaquy was right to say in his preface that "several people" have produced Summaries, and it is without a doubt among people of his own trade, among publishers, that we have to look for the ones responsible for some of the editions. Who would not want to publish a textbook which did not require a great capital investment and which was assured of a certain distribution? Consequently, Calvin is not the editor of the primers, and the examples which survive show that there were various types of them. But all have the same outline as the previous Genevan tradition, and all give, with the coming of Calvin, the reformer's texts³² which he supplied for these booklets.

Another word about those for whom the primers were intended.

The principal users naturally were children. They learned how to read and do math from them, while at the same time assimilating the essential elements of the Christian faith. The pupils in the particular schools needed no other catechism in hand than the primer. As for those who attended the College, all using Calvin's manual would have been happy to find in the primer the "Summary" required to be admitted to the Holy Supper.

When in 1559 the new College enhanced the development of public instruction, Calvin's catechism touched the largest groups of youth. Nonetheless, the primer kept its place as the primary textbook and supplementary catechetical book.³³ Supplied with a new piece entitled "The Exercise for the Father of the Family," it served in homes as a prayer

book. An example is the edition of 1562, and the book printed by Jaquy is an overloaded one.

Finally, the primers were excellent tracts for teaching. While teaching children the elements of reading, they spread abroad Reformed ideas outside the confines of Geneva. Thanks to this small format, they slipped easily into the packs of peddlers³⁴ and were carried far and wide. Especially the schools, where continuing efforts were aimed against the teachers of faith, were won by these little books.³⁵

In conclusion, let us emphasize once again that Calvin impresses us as less austere than legend would have it. He found a tradition of elementary religious instruction in Geneva. He did not give up his own catechism for it, but let the primer remain, adapting it entirely for his own needs.

Appendix¹

EXAMPLES OF THE GENEVA PRIMERS

I) *L'ABC françois* [Geneva], [Jean Crespin], 1551, octavo. Example in London, British Museum, call number: 3504.dg.15, 1st section, unicum.

We reproduce exactly the text of this edition and indicate in the margin the pagination of the booklet. Changes made are minimal: conformity to modern usage for capitalization and punctuation marks, distinction between "u" and "v," corrections of typographical errors.

p. 1 [Title page.]

p. 2 St. James 1:5-6a

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God. . . and it will be given him; but let him ask in faith, with no doubting.

p. 3 Our help is in the name of God who made heaven and earth. Amen.

First day,	a b c d,
Second,	e f g h,
Third,	i k l m,
Fourth,	n o p q,
Fifth,	r s t,
Sixth,	v x y z.
Seventh, repeat all letters.	

In doing this, the apprentice will learn more in a week than he can in two months if he says all the letters at one time.

Thus little by little one must teach writing, each day doing one or two letters.

¹In this appendix, notes that pertained only to translation of old French into modern French have been omitted; therefore, note numbers from this point onward do not correspond to those in the original.

Note that the master should demonstrate the lesson two or three times before the child is required to say it, and that he not expect that the child have mastered it; for that will make him lose the little bit of confidence he has.

A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P Q R S T V
X Y Z

p. 4 THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The first question	Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
2nd	Thy kingdom come.
3rd	Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
4th	Give us this day our daily bread.
5th	And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
6th	And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

p. 5 For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
for ever. Amen.

ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

That is, the principal points of the faith of a Christian.

The first part	I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
2nd	And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary; He suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead and buried, Descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the quick and the dead.
p. 6	
3rd	I believe in the Holy Spirit.
4th	I believe in the Holy universal Church; The communion of the saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the flesh; The life eternal.

p. 7 THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE LAW OF GOD
Exodus chap. 20

Preface Hear, O Israel: I am the Lord your God, who led you out of the land
of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

The First Table

- 1st You shall have no other gods before me.
- 2nd You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
- p. 8 You shall not bow down to them or serve them;
For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,
But showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- 3rd You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
- p. 9 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall
4th labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

p. 10 The Second Table

- 5th Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.
- 6th You shall not kill.
- 7th You shall not commit adultery.
- 8th You shall not steal.
- 9th You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 10th You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

- p. 11 The Summary of the Whole Law Is:
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind;
And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. St. Matthew 22 [37b, 39b].

PRAYER BEFORE A MEAL

O sovereign Pastor and Master,
Look upon this little flock,
And with your blessings let it pasture
One who does not want too much,
Nurturing little by little your creature,
Up until today,
By Jesus, who for our sake wore
A body needing nourishment.³⁶

AFTER A MEAL

p. 12

Eternal Father, who commands us
 To take no thought for tomorrow,
 For the bounty of this day we give
 You the thanks of the human heart.
 So then since it has pleased you by your hand
 To give food and drink to the body,
 May it please you from heavenly food
 To fill our souls with your glory.³⁷

SHORT PRAYER [BEFORE A MEAL]

Let us all partake in the name of Jesus
 The source of all that comes from above.

AFTER A MEAL

Praise to God for all his benefits
 Who nourishes us and all his own.

PRAYER BEFORE A MEAL

Lord, from whom comes the plenitude of all good things, let your blessing rest upon all your poor servants and sanctify to us the gifts which we receive from your bounty, so that we might use them soberly and purely in accordance with your will; and in this way acknowledge you as Father and author of every kindness, always seeking first the spiritual bread of your word, by which our souls are eternally nourished by Jesus Christ your Son, our Savior. Amen.³⁸

AFTER A MEAL

Lord God, we return our thanks to you for all the benefits that we receive continually from your hand, by which it pleases you to sustain us in this bodily life, administering to us everything that we need. Most particularly we give you thanks that it has pleased you to renew us in the hope of a better life which [p. 13] you have revealed to us through your holy Gospel. We pray that you would not in any way let our affections be rooted here in corruptible things, but that we would always look to higher things, waiting on our Savior Jesus Christ until he appears to redeem us. Amen.³⁹

A PRAYER TO SAY IN THE MORNING ON RISING

My God, my Father and my Savior, since it has pleased you to grant me the grace of enduring through this night even to the present day, grant me also now the blessing that I use everything for your service, so that I neither think, nor say, nor do anything unless it is to please you and to obey your good will, so that in this way all my works be to the glory of your name and the building up of my neighbors. And as it pleases you to make the sun to shine on the earth to illumine us bodily, also grant by the brightness of your Spirit, that my understanding and my heart be illumined to guide me in the right path of your justice. Thus when I undertake anything, always let my chief aim and intention be to show reverence in

my journey, to serve and honor you, expecting all my blessings and my well-being to come from your benediction,[p. 14] so that I may undertake nothing which would displease you. Moreover, even as I labor for my bodily needs and for the present life, let me always look farther, that is to the heavenly life which you have promised to your children. Nevertheless, let it please you to be the protector of my body as well as my soul, and guard me against all the temptation of the devil, and deliver me from all the earthly dangers which might come to me. And since it is worth nothing to have a good beginning without persevering, grant not only for today that I be taken into your holy keeping, but for my whole life, continuing and growing daily in your grace within me until you bring me to full union with your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, who is the true Sunshine of our souls, shining day and night without end and forever more. And so that I might obtain such mercies from you, please forgive my past faults, granting me pardon in your infinite mercy as you have promised to all those who heartily request it.⁴⁰

A PRAYER TO SAY BEFORE SLEEPING

Lord God, since it has pleased you to create the night for the repose of humankind even as you have ordained the day for work, grant me the grace of such rest this [p. 15] night, according to the need of my body, that my soul always be awake to you and that my heart be raised up in your love, so that I may abandon all earthly cares and be relieved as my infirmity requires. Grant that I never forget you, but rather let the recall of your bounty and grace be always imprinted in my memory, so that my conscience might have its spiritual rest, just as my body. Moreover, let not my sleep be excessive so as to indulge the ease of my flesh, but only to satisfy the fragility of my nature so that I may be prepared for your service. Grant also, if you will, to keep me pure both in my body and in my spirit and preserve me from all dangers, so that my own sleep may be for the glory of your name. And since the day has not yet passed when I have not offended you in various ways because I am a poor sinner, bury all my faults by your mercy so that I will not be cast out of your presence, just as everything is now hidden by the shadows you have sent upon the earth. Hear my prayer, my God, my Father and my Savior, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.⁴¹

A PRAYER TO SAY IN THE MORNING, FROM PSALM 119 [9, 18, 34]

[p. 16] How can a young person keep his way pure? By guarding it according to thy word.
 Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.
 Give me understanding, that I may keep thy law and observe it with my whole heart.

ANOTHER PRAYER TO SAY BEFORE WORK

May the Lord God and Father please accompany us by his Holy Spirit, governing us and guiding us, so that everything we do, say, or think, may be for his honor and glory, in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.⁴²

A BRIEF TREATISE REQUIRED FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO PARTAKE OF THE HOLY SUPPER OF OUR SAVIOR⁴³

There is one God alone upon whom all things depend.

The first point by which we rightly honor God lies in this: that we place all our confidence in him and that we know the means of recognizing him in Jesus Christ.

For this purpose the confession of faith recorded above will serve.

[p. 17]

This confession contains four parts.

The first concerns God the Father who is the beginning and principal cause of all things.

The second concerns his Son Jesus Christ who is the eternal wisdom of God. And this part contains the whole history of our redemption, to teach that by Jesus Christ alone do we obtain salvation and the means by which we acquire it.

The third concerns the Holy Spirit who is the energy and power of God, which he pours out on his creature and yet which always resides in him.

The fourth concerns the Church and the blessings of God upon it.

The second point by which we rightly honor God consists in our obedience to his will.

The rule to obey him is given to us in the Ten Commandments of the Law.

The first four commandments contain the duty that we owe our God.

The six following ones contain the duty that we owe our neighbors.

The third point by which we rightly honor God lies in that we invoke him alone in all our needs.

[p. 18]

The instruction by which we rightly invoke God is given to us in the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The first three petitions of this prayer regard the glory of God.

The other three concern our well-being and our profit.

The fourth point by which we rightly honor God lies in our expecting every blessing from him, since from him alone come all blessings.

The promises of this free goodness which God gives his own are contained in the Gospel.

A person understands these promises by faith.

Faith is a certain knowledge of the benevolence of God toward us, founded on the free promise which is given us in Jesus Christ and confirmed in our heart by his Holy Spirit.

Because of the weakness of our faith our Lord has ordained the sacraments.

A sacrament is an outward witness which by a visible sign represents for us the promises of God spiritually accomplished in us.

Baptism is like an entrance into the Church of God for us, and represents for us the remission of our sins and our renewal of life.

[p. 19]

The water, since its property is to wash, signifies for us the washing of our souls which is done for us by the blood of Jesus Christ in the remission of our sins.

The water is also put on our head as a sign of death, but only for a minute of time, in order to represent for us our resurrection.

The Supper was instituted by our Lord to assure us that by the communication of his body and his blood our souls are nourished in hope of eternal life.

The bread and the wine signify to us the body and the blood of Jesus Christ which have the same effect upon our souls as bread and wine upon our bodies, namely to nourish and strengthen them.

The true purpose of communing at the Supper is first to examine oneself to see if one has true faith, repentance, and charity toward ones neighbors.

THE FOLLOWING ARE PASSAGES OF HOLY SCRIPTURE WHICH ARE
ESPECIALLY USEFUL AND OF GREAT VALUE

St. Paul to the Colossians, Chap. 3 [3:20-4:1]

[p. 20] Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly master, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

St. Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. 5 [15-21]

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another [p. 21] in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

St. Paul in the First Letter to the Thessalonians, Chap. 5 [15]

See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

St. James in the Fourth Chap. [7-8a, 10-11a]

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. Do not speak evil against one another, brethren. He that speaks evil against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law.

St. Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. 5 [3-6]

But immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is fitting among saints. Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity, which are not fitting; but instead let there be thanksgiving [p. 22]. Be sure of this, that no immoral or impure man, or one who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for it is because of these things that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

St. Paul in the Sixth Chap. of First Corinthians [9b-10]

Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.

St. John in the Third Chap. [16,18a]

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already.

St. John in the Third Chap. of his First Epistle [2]

Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

St. Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. 1 [4]

[p. 23] [God] chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

St. Paul in the Fourth Chap. of the First Letter to the Thessalonians [7]

For God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness.

St. Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. 2 [8-10]

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Deuteronomy 12 [8, 32]

You shall not do according to all that we are doing here this day, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes. Everything that I command you you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to it or take from it.

Jesus Christ said in St. Luke, Seventeenth Chap. [10]

So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty."

Jesus Christ said in St. John, Chap. 15 [12-14]

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends [p. 24]. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

St. John in the Third Chap. of his First Epistle [18]

Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth.

Jesus Christ said in St. John in the Sixteenth Chap. [23b]

Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you in my name.

Jesus Christ said in St. Matthew, Chap. 7 [7-8b]

Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

Joel in the Second Chap. [32a]

All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.

St. John in the Second Chap. of his First Epistle [1b-2]

But if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

St. John in his First Epistle Chap. 1 [7b]

The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

[p. 25]

St. Peter in the Second Chap. of his First Epistle [13-14, 17-18]

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to the kind and gentle but also to the overbearing.

In The Acts, Chap. 5 [29]

We must obey God rather than man.

I Samuel, Fifteenth Chap. [22b]

To obey is better than sacrifice.

Job in the First Chap. [21]

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

St. Paul to Timothy in the First Epistle, Sixth Chap. [7-10]

For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world; but if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be [p. 26] content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs.

St. Paul to the Romans, Chap. 8 [17]

And if children, then [we are] heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

St. Paul in The Acts, Fourteenth Chap. [22b]

Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

St. Peter in His First Epistle, Fourth Chap. [12-14a, 15-19]

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed. Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a wrongdoer, or a mischief-maker; yet if one suffers as a Christian [p. 27], let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

And if the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will do right and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator.

Jesus Christ Teaching his Disciples Said in St. Matthew, Chap. 5 [3-12]

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[p. 28] Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Jesus Christ said in St. John, Chap. 16 [2b-3]

The hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do this because they have not known the Father, nor me.

In St. Matthew, Tenth Chap. [28, 32-33, 37-38]

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but who denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

[p.29] *St. Matthew, Twenty-fifth Chap. [31-46]*

When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, "Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

[p.30] Then he will say to those at his left hand, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

Then they also will answer, "Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?"

Then he will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me."

And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Solomon Makes a Request of God, Proverbs 30 [7-9]

Two things I ask of thee; deny them not to me before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God.

[p. 31]

Proverbs 6 [16-19]

There are six things which the Lord hates, seven which are an abomination to him:

haughty eyes;
a lying tongue;
hands that shed innocent blood;
a heart that devises wicked plans;
feet that make haste to run to evil;
a false witness who breathes out lies;
and a man who sows discord among brothers.

Psalms 9 [17]⁴⁴

The wicked shall depart to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.

Deuteronomy 18 [10-12a]

There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord.

[p. 32]

Deuteronomy 6 [7]

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Deuteronomy 1 [17a]

You shall not be partial in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike.

Isaiah 40 [8b]

The word of our God will stand forever.

Deuteronomy 8 [3b]

Man does not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Proverbs 30 [5-6]

Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

God Said in Jeremiah, Chap 9 [23-24]

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight.

[p. 33]

In St. Matthew, Chap. 4 [10b], Jesus Christ Said

You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

Psalms 9 [10b]⁴⁵

Thou, O Lord, hast not forsaken those who seek thee.

**BRIEF PRAYERS⁴⁶ THE CHILDREN ORDINARILY SAY BEFORE
RETURNING HOME FROM SCHOOL**

Blessed is the one who always remembers
To praise God and who fears offending him
In any way.
Now let us fear him in all humility
And adore him in spirit and in truth
With humble prayer.

Eternal Father, grant that in one same Spirit
We be one by your Son Jesus Christ
Who is our victory.
So that, knowing you by true and lively faith,
We come to belong to you,
To serve your glory.

Our Father who art in heaven, etc.

[p. 34]

Thanks be to God who from death delivers us
By his only Son in whom we live:
O how his name is gracious and sweet!
Let us live to God without a thought for ourselves
To the Eternal let us render honor and glory,
And remember all his benefits.

O Eternal, let glory be rendered unto you
For ever, and everywhere
May your praise and your name be glorious,
Your name which is exalted in the heavens.

Deuteronomy 13 [1-3]

If a prophet arises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder which he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, "Let us go after other gods," which you have not known, "and let us serve them," you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

I Timothy 1 [17]

To the king of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[p. 35]

THE FORM FOR QUESTIONING CHILDREN WHO
WISH TO RECEIVE THE SUPPER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST⁴⁷

First the minister asks

In whom do you believe?

The child

In God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his Son, and in the Holy Spirit.

The minister

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, are they more than one God?

The child

No.

The Minister

Should we serve God according to his commandments or according to human traditions?

The child

We should serve according to his commandments and not according to human commandments.

The Minister

Are you able to accomplish the commandments of God by yourself?

The child

No.

The minister

Who then accomplishes them in you?

The child

The Holy Spirit.

[p. 36]

The minister

And when God gives you his Holy Spirit, can you do them perfectly?

The child

Not at all.

The minister

And yet God condemns and rejects everyone who does not perfectly fulfill his commandments.

The child

It is true.

The minister

By what means then will you be saved and delivered from the condemnation of God?

The child

By the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The minister

How can this be?

The child

Because by his death he has given us life and has reconciled us to God his Father.

The minister

And to whom do you pray?

The child

God.

The minister

In whose name do you pray?

The child

[p. 37] In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who is our advocate and intercessor.

The minister

How many sacraments are there in the Christian church?

The child

Two.

The minister

What are they?

The child

Baptism and the Holy Supper.

The minister

What does Baptism signify?

The child

It has two parts. For our Lord represents in it the remission of our sins and then our spiritual regeneration or renewal.

The minister

And the Supper, what does it signify for us?

The child

It signifies to us that by the communion of the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, our souls are nourished in the hope of eternal life.

The minister

What do the bread and the wine which are given to us in the Supper show us?

The child

They show us that the body and the blood of Jesus Christ have the same efficacy for our souls as bread and wine have for our bodies.

The minister

Do you mean that the body of Jesus Christ is contained in the bread and his blood in the wine?

The child

No.

The minister

Where then must we seek to have the fulness of Christ in us?

The child

In heaven, in the glory of God his Father.

The minister

What is the means by which we can attain entrance into heaven where Jesus Christ is?

The child

It is faith.

The minister

We therefore must have true faith before we can rightly employ this holy sacrament.

The child

Yes.

The minister

And how can we have this faith?

The child

We have it by the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and makes certain the promises of God which are made to us in the Gospel.

[p. 39]

FOR LEARNING NUMBERS, THE FIGURES UP TO A HUNDRED

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.
28.	29.	30.	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.
37.	38.	39.	40.	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.
46.	47.	48.	49.	50.	51.	52.	53.	54.
55.	56.	57.	58.	59.	60.	61.	62.	63.

64.	65.	66.	67.	68.	69.	70.	71.	72.
73.	74.	75.	76.	77.	78.	79.	80.	81.
82.	83.	84.	85.	86.	87.	88.	89.	90.
91.	92.	93.	94.	95.	96.	97.	98.	99.
100.								

And so following

p. 40 Do unto others as you would have them do unto you: it is the teaching of the Law and the Prophets.

[p. 40] [Sacra Anchora]
 [There follow copies of the title pages of three other primers.]

NOTES

¹*Instruction des chrestiens*. Genève, de l'imprimerie de François Jaquy pour Guillaume Fournet, 1562. In 16mo, 103 x 57 mm page size; 285 pages of 31 lines + [3] pages, the third blank. Signatures: A—S. Numerous errors of pagination, Preface in italics; all the rest of the text in Roman letters of various size. Running titles, marginal notes, catchwords. Some decorative letters. Floral decoration, pp. 146, 222, 284, [287]. On François Jaquy et Guillaume Fournet, see Paul Chaix, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Genève de 1550 à 1564*. Genève, 1954, pp. 187 and 196-197. Printer's mark: the victory of God (illustration of Ps. 2:9). Example in Geneva, *Bibliothèque Publique e Universitaire*, location Bc 2285, 1st floor.

²In fact, the *Catechism of Calvin* of 1542 contains, in the form of an exhortation, in the French editions a simple "Epistle to the reader and in the Latin editions a letter addressed by the reformer to the pastors of the Churches of eastern Phrygia." The contents of this letter, it is true, are intended for the Christian churches in general. Cf. *Ioannis calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, 59 volumes, *Corpus Reformatorum*, Brunswick, 1863-1900 (cited as OC), volume VI, 3-8.

³We have not succeeded in identifying the author.

⁴This outline differs from that of the *Catechism of Calvin* of 1542, which, as we know, follows the order: Faith, Law, Prayer, Sacraments.

⁵Cf. *Edict fait par le Roy sur certains articles faitz par la faculté de Théologie de Paris touchans et concernans nostre foy et religion chrestienne, avec le cathologue des livres censurez*. Paris. Jean André, 1545. 8vo, [36] pages, A-I4. Our citation is found on page H1 verso. Copy in Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, number D.8.4285. Room 4.

⁶On the arrest of this young man, 18 years old and a native of Caen, in Normandy, see *Archives communales de Dijon*, D 65. The legal record is dated 3 February 1560 (=1561, the new year beginning at Easter). Cf. Henri Hauser, *Les compagnonnages d'arts et métiers à Dijon aux XVII et XVIII siècles*, Paris, 1907, 71-72.

⁷Perhaps *Le Nouveau Testament* published in Geneva by Pierre-Jacques Poullain and Antoine Reboul in 1558, in 8vo, which included the *Psaumes de David* and *La Forme des Prières ecclésiastiques*. Cf. W.-J. van Eys, *Bibliographie des Bibles et des Nouveaux Testaments en langue française des XV et XVI siècles*, 2 volumes, Geneva, 1900-1901, v. 2 no. 79; and Jannelore Jahr, *Studien zur Ueberlieferungsgeschichte der Confession de foi von 1559*, Neukirchen 1964, 135, no. 166.

⁸One of a number of editions of the Psalter, perhaps the following: *Psaumes de David, mis en rythme françoise par Clement Marot et Théodore de Bèze*, published by Pierre Davantès in 1560, in 8vo. The work, which opens with a preface by the publisher, dated "From Geneva this 18th of September 1560" is followed by *La Forme des Prières ecclésiastiques*. Cf. Pierre Pidoux, *Le Psautier huguenot du XVIe siècle*, 2 volumes, Basle, 1962, v. 2, 118-119; et H. Jahr, 102, no. 75.

⁹*L'ABC françois* [Geneva] [Jean Crespin], 1551. 8vo, 96 x 57 mm page format; 39 pages of 30 lines + [1] page. Signatures: A—B8, C4. Roman characters with a font two times greater for the basic text. No running title. Marginal notes. Catchwords. On Jean Crespin, see P. Chaix, 165-165. Printer's mark on title page and last page: anchor with

serpent. Copy in London, British museum, number 3504. d. 15, Room 1, unicum. We reproduce this work in its entirety below.

¹⁰*ABC et chrestienne instruction bien utile.* Geneva, Antoine Davodeau and Lucas de Mortière, n.d. 16mo, 87 x 52 mm format; approx. 88 pages of 21 lines. The only copy known of this primer is unfortunately incomplete: pages 11-16 and 81ff. are missing. The existing sections are signes A—E8. Roman characters of various fonts. No running title and no marginal notes. Catchwords. Several decorated letters. Ornamental flower, p. 39. Publisher's mark: bearded king with turk's cap. This booklet can be dated with great probability in the year 1562, because it is at that time that Antoine Davodeau worked in association with Lucas de Mortière. Cf. P. Chaix, 166 and 172; on their joint work in 1562, see *Genava*, journal published by le Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève, 1959, 269-272. Copy in Geneva, *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire*, number: Bd 1414 Rés., unicum. See the plate of the title page below.

¹¹*L'ABC ou l'instruction des chrestiens* [Geneva] [Jean Crespin], 1568. 8vo, 122 x 65 mm de mise en page; [16] pages of 30 lines. Signatures A-B8. Roman letters. No running title, no marginal notes. Catchwords. Decorative band over the title and on page A.ii. ro. Several ornamental letters and headings. The booklet was certainly printed on the presses of Jean Crespin: the decorative band of the title page is found on page 3 of the work of Th. de Bèze, *Tractatio de polygamia et divortiis*, Geneva, J. Crespin, 1568, 8vo; the ornamented letters N (p. A. iii ro) and I (p. B. iii ro) appear in the *Lexicon graeco-latinum* of G. Budé, J. Toussaint and R. Constantin ([Geneva], J. Crespin, 1562, 2o) on pages 69 and 67 of the appendix; as for the smaller ornate letters and the headings, they are verified in *Les Oeuvres de J. Sleidan* (Geneva, J. Crespin, 1566, 2o) on the last non-numbered pages of indexes. Copy in Paris, *Bibliothèque de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, number A 1181, unicum. See below a plate of the title page.

¹²*L'ABC ou intruction des chrestiens.* Geneva, Paul Marceau, 1630. In 16mo, 100 x 64 mm page format.; [16] pages of 24 lines. Signature: A-B8. Roman letters, with a larger font for the basic texts. No running title, nor marginal notes. Catchwords. Border and decorative flowers on title page. Platform f. A1, v, A3 r, A4 r, B8vo. Copy in Geneva. *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire*: number BD 1989, unicum. See below a plate of the title page.

¹³The insertion of the rudiments of the Greek language in the primer of 1568 coincides with a general effort otherwise made in Geneva to favor the knowledge of this language. Théodore de Bèze published the same year a Greek grammar: cf. Frédéric Gardy, *Bibliographie des oeuvres de Théodore de Bèze*, Geneva, 1960, 136-137, nos. 239 and 240.

¹⁴The roots of this type of student booklet in the catechetical tradition of the Middle Ages is a known fact. For the Genevan tradition, see Henri Delarrue, *Les premiers manuels en usage au Collège de Genève*, in the general work, *Le Collège de Genève 1559-1959*, pp. 57-75, notably pages 59-61. For the Parisian tradition, certainly independent of the Genevan, but resting on the same sources, cf. the primer published by Robert Estienne around 1540; this interesting booklet is pointed out by A.-A. Renouard, *Annales de l'imprimerie des Estienne*, 2 volumes, Paris, 1837-1838, v. 1, p. 92, no. 13, and is found described in *Répertoire des ouvrages pédagogiques du XVIe siècle*, *Bibliothèques de Paris et des départements*, Nieuwkoop (Holland), B. de Graaf, 1962 (Photomechanical reproduction of the Paris edition, 1886), p. 1.

¹⁵This booklet was found in the form of a printer's proof in an old binding. Format in 8vo, 112 x 68 mm pages; [4] pages of 20 lines. Signatures: a4. No title; the contents begin immediately. Printing in red and black; Gothic letters. No running title, marginal notes, nor catchwords. First letter p. aj ro; ornamented letter p. aj vo, aiiij ro. At the end of the text are these words: "*Impressum Gebenn. per Gabrielem P.*" No date. On this booklet, its printer and date, see *Genava*, 1932, pp. 166-167. This curious typographical document is preserved in Geneva, *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire*, number: Bd 2062 Rés. unicum.

¹⁶*La doctrine et instruction des chrestiens et chrestiennes*. Geneva, Wiegand Koeln, 1532. In 16mo, 80 x 56 mm de mise en page; [32] pages of 14 lines. Signatures: a-c8, a8. As the signatures indicate, the little work is divided in two parts, each having its own title. The last eight pages with the list of words divided into syllables form the second part. Printing in red and black; Gothic letters. No running title, marginal notes, nor catchwords. Borders around both titles, four woodcuts in the first part, a face in woodcut at the end of the second. On this booklet, see: *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de feu M. Ernest Stroehlin*, second part, Paris 1912, pp. 26-27, no. 503. It is kept now at the *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève*, number 1991, Rés. unicum.—This booklet, like the former, begins with a sign of the cross placed at the head of the alphabet. It is replaced in the primers by the invocation: "Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Amen."

¹⁷*L'instruction des enfans, contenant la maniere de prononcer et escrire en francoys. L'oraison de Iesus Christ. Les articles de la foy. Les dix commandemens. La salutation angelique*. Geneva [Pierre de Vingle], 1533. 16mo, 100 x 63 mm page format; [64] pages of 29 lines. Signatures: A-H8. Gothic letters. No running title, marginal notes, nor catchwords. On this small work see: E. Droz, *Pierre de Vingle, imprimeur de Farel*, in the general work, *Aspects de la propagande religieuse*, Geneva, 1957, pp. 66-67. Copy in Geneva, *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire*, number: Bd 1477, Rés., unicum.

¹⁸*L'instruction des enfans, contenant la maniere de prononcer et escrire en francoys. Les dix commandemens. Les articles de la foy. L'oraison de Iesus Christ. La salutation angélique*. [The variations in the title as compared with the preceding number seem to indicate a new arrangement of the subject matter, that is Law-Faith-Prayer, exactly the one adopted by Calvin in his first Catechism. However, it is nothing of the kind. The contents of this second edition follow strictly the order and the text of the first.] Geneva, Jean Gérard, 1537. 8vo, 90 x 45 mm page format; 149 pages of 34 lines + [3] pages. Signatures: a-i8, k4. Roman letters. Running title; some marginal notes; catchwords. Border around title, encompassing the first three words. On this booklet see: Théophile Dufour, *Notice bibliographique sur le Catéchisme et la Confession de foi de Calvin (1537) et sur les autres livres imprimés à Genève et à Neuchâtel dan les premiers temps de la Réforme (1533-1540)*, Geneva, 1878, pp. 144-145; and H. Jahr, op. cit., p. 51, note 138. Copy in the *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève*, number: Bd 581 Rés., Room 2.

¹⁹Cf. Jules Le Coultre, *Maturin Cordier*, Neuchâtel, 1926, 210-211.

²⁰*L'ordre du Collège de Genève*, 1559: OC, Xa, 75 and 79.

²¹[Antoine Cathelan?], *Passevent parisien*, 3rd edition, 1556, reprinted, Paris, 1875, p. 74, even affirms, no doubt with exaggeration, that "the boys and girls by eight years old at least" were admitted.—Opposing him, Alain Dufour, *La fondation du Collège de Genève et l'histoire de l'éducation*, in the general work *Le Collège de Genève, 1559-1959*, Geneva, 1959,

pp. 35-36, shows p. 48, that the scholars generally remained more than a year in a class, particularly the smallest children. The age of first communion was therefore not fixed.

²²OC, Xa, 28 and 115-116. Cf. also Jean Calvin, *Deux congrégations et exposition du catéchisme*, first reprinting of the edition of 1563 with introduction and notes by R. Peter, Paris, 1964, introduction, XXV-XXVI. The student at the college did not abandon for anything else the recitation of the catechism. The Greek (original edition 1551) and Hebrew (original edition 1554) translations that were made of it were very probably used as exercise books in the higher classes, and it was again the catechism which served as the norm to the future pastor for his profession of faith: OC, Xa, 93.

²³OC, Xa, 75.

²⁴Around the middle of the 16th century, teaching was spread out among the *Collège de Rive* and in six small schools in the different quarters. The custom among the little children taught in the various quarters had so passed into habit that the Council did not believe it was obliged to suppress it altogether. In 1546, by the recommendation of Calvin, it reduced the number to six, of which the masters were required to be authorized by the State and began to bring their children once a week on Wednesdays to the *Collège de Rive*, where they undertook a common assignment. Cf. Haenri Fazy, *L'instruction primaire à Genève*, Geneva 1896, pp. 14-15; Coultre, op. cit., p. 319; Henri Naef, *Les origines de la réforme à Genève*, 1936, pp. 294-295.

²⁵Sermon 121 on Deuteronomy: OC XXVII, 658.

²⁶Sermon 4 on the Epistle to Titus: OC. LIV, 429.—In the College, Calvin held firm to this principle: cf. note 33 below and especially H. Delarue, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

²⁷*L'ABC françois*. [Geneva], [Jean Crespin], 1551, p. 3. See p. below, p. 7. In the same line is written this "*huictain*" [poem of 8 lines] found in an edition of the "Brief Catechism" of Th. de Bèze, which appeared in Geneva in 1673 in *Recueil de principaux catechismes des Eglises reformées* (cf. F. Gardy, *Bibliographie des oeuvres de Th. de Bèze*, Geneva, 1960, no. 314):

*Qui aux enfans montrer veut son savoir,
A ces poincts-cy egard il doit avoir:
Prier faut Dieu tout du commencement
Et puis apres enseigner doucement
L'enfant petit, sans trop le menacer,
Car peu à peu on le doit avancer
En luy disant bien souvent sa leçon
Et en donnant aux lettres leur vray son.*

Whoever wishes to show children his knowledge
To these points must give consideration:
To pray to God at the beginning
And then teach gently
The little child, without threatening him too much,
Because one must progress little by little
In repeating to him very often his lesson
And in giving to the letters their true sound.

²⁸Commentary on I Corinthians 3:2. We cite it after the last French edition of this commentary which appeared in Geneva during the life of Calvin: *Commentaire sur les epistres de S. Paul et aussi sur l'epistre aux Hebreux, item sur les epistres canoniques*, two parts in one volume, Geneva, C. Badius and J. Bonnefoy, 1562, 2o, page 93 recto. Original Latin text: OC, XLIX, 347. Cf. also Commentary on Isaiah 28, 10: "let their masters not fill little children with large readings in as much as they are not capable of doing it, rather let it distill in them like little drops. In this way one repeats to them two or more times the same thing, and shows them often the same precepts; in short, the students keep to the rudiments until they come to judgment and reason." *Commentaires sur le prophet Isaie*. Geneva, François Perrin, 1572, 2o, 165 pages verso and 166 recto. The original Latin: OC, XXXVI, 468.

²⁹Commentary on Hebrews 5:12, cited after *Commentaire sur les epistres*, 1562, op. cit., p. 378 ro (=OC, LV, 65). See also *Sermons on the Book of Isaiah, Supplementa Calviniana*, v. II, Neukirchen 1961, p. 522, 524, 527, 535, 550.

³⁰*L'Ordre du College de Geneve*, 1559: OC, Xa, 75.

³¹*Catechisme* [Geneva], R. Estienne, 1553, 8vo (Copy in Geneva, *Bibl. Publique et Universitaire*, number Bd. 74, Room 1, Rés.). *La maniere d'interroguer les enfans* is found on pp. 114-117. Reproduced in OC, VI, 147-160.

³²That the name of Calvin does not appear anywhere in these booklets does not undermine the thesis, because the different editions of the Catechism of Geneva are themselves very often anonymous.

³³According to *L'Ordre du College de Geneve*, 1559, the first book put into the hands of the pupils of the 7th class is "The Latin-French Primer" (OC, Xa, 75-77). No copy has come to us, but its contents must have been similar to those of the primers that we know.

³⁴This kind of commerce was not the least hazardous. Barthélémy Hector of Poitiers was removed from Geneva on account of religion. A peddler in the valleys of the Dauphine and the Piedmont, he was arrested in March 1556, delivered to the Parliament of Turin and condemned to be burned alive. In his pack were found some books published in Geneva: "Instruction for little children, Psalms and several others. . . ." Cf. P. Chaix, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

³⁵Cf. Henri Hauser, *Etudes sur la Réforme française*, Paris, 1909, pp. 255-298. The Genevan primers were not the only ones of this kind: Hauser, pp. 274-286, treats in detail the following booklet: *Alphabet ou instruction chrestienne pour les petis enfans*. Lyon, Pierre Estiard, 1558, 8vo (Copy at Paris, *Bibl. Nationale*, number Rés. D. 67940). Hauser supposes its author is François Landry, whom Marguerite d'Angoulême named *aumônier* of her *Enfants rouges*. The extracts given by Hauser show that the booklet is Lutheran.—Let us notice also the following small work, even more interesting for that with which we are concerned: *ABC, edo chirstinoen instructionea othoitz eguiteco formarequin*. La Rochelle, Pierre Haultin, 1571, 16mo. The editor, Jean de Liçarrague, presents here in the Basque language the following contents: 1st, Alphabet and first elements of grammar; 2nd, Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, Summary of the Law and three biblical quotations; 3rd, Liturgy for family worship; 4th, Calvin's Catechism; 5th, The Manner of Questioning Children Whom One Wishes to Receive at the Holy Supper; 6th, Definition of certain dogmatic terms; 7th, Confession of faith (in 40 articles); 8th, First elements of arithmetic. Thus we have here a booklet which under numbers 1 to 5 and 8 represents a

sort of combination of Calvin's elementary catechism and his manual. On the subject of this booklet: *L'imprimerie à La Rochelle*, 3 vols, Geneva, 1960, v. 2: Louis Desgraves, *Les Haultin* (1571-1623), p. 3. Copies in Paris, *Bibl. de l'Arsenal*, number: 8o T 5971, Rés. and *Bibl. Mazarine*, number 49178 Rés.

³⁶Prayer of Clément Marot: cf. *Oeuvres de Clément Marot*. Edition Georges Guiffrey, 5 vols., Paris 1875-1931, v. 4, 421.

³⁷*Idem*, v. 4, 422.

³⁸Prayer of Calvin found in his catechism from 1545 on: cf. OC, v. 6, 139 and 141.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 135 and 137.

⁴¹Prayer of Calvin found in his catechism from 1545 on: Cf. OC, v. 6, 143 and 145.

⁴²Prayer found in the editions of Calvin's catechism from 1561 on: Cf. OC, vol. 6, 137, note 3.

⁴³This title varies according to the edition: In the primer of 1562, we read: "Treatise necessary for those who wish to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord and only Savior Jesus Christ," whereas the primers of 1568 and 1630 say "Summary of principal points which must be known by those who wish to commune at the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ." Although the titles are different, the text to which they apply is the same throughout: A careful comparison reveals only insignificant variations. The text itself is an excellent summary of Calvin's catechism.

⁴⁴The Psalm is cited according to the versification of Marot. Cf. *Oeuvres de Clément Marot*, op. cit., v. 5, p. 218.

⁴⁵*Ibid.* The choice of all these biblical texts (see also the two texts after the "Brief Prayers") is evidence of the theology of Calvin. It is interesting to note the pericope of Matthew 25:31-46, for which Martin Bucer already had a predilection.

⁴⁶They are all of Maturin Cordier, the famous teacher and friend of Calvin. They are found in *Les cantiques spirituels de Maturin Cordier, pleins de toute bonne doctrine et consolation* [Geneva], Jean Gérard, 1557, 8vo. On these songs, sole evidence of the sort that appeared in Calvin's Geneva, along with some Psalms versified by Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze, see Jules Le Coultre, op. cit., pp. 267-282, and a copy of the edition of 1557 preserved in the *Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève*, number: Bd 2101, Room 2, Rés.

⁴⁷Piece found in the editions of Calvin's catechism following 1553. See note 31 above and OC, 6, 147-160.—Concerning this piece, Wilhelm Niesel wrote in 1934 an excellent article urging the Reformed churches to revise their practice of confirmation: cf. W. Niesel, *Die Konfirmation nach einem reformatorischen Formular*, which appeared first in the journal *Evangelische Theologie*, 1934, pp. 296-307, and was reproduced in a work collecting several lectures of the author: *Gemeinschaft mit Jesus Christus*. Munich, Kaiser Verlag, 1964, pp. 144-153. What W. Niesel says applies not only to this portion of the primer, but is all the more valid when considering the whole text of the booklet: The reception of catechumens must be founded on a knowledge and not on their voluntary commitment.